



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
Feb. 7, 2014

For More Information, Contact:
Shannon Jahner
HIV Prevention Coordinator
North Dakota Department of Health
Phone: 701.328.1059
E-mail: sdjahner@nd.gov

North Dakota Observes National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
Department of Health Urges Testing for At-Risk People

BISMARCK, N.D. – In observance of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day on February 7, 2014, the North Dakota Department of Health is urging people at risk for HIV/AIDS to get tested, according to Shannon Jahner, HIV Prevention Coordinator for the North Dakota Department of Health.

It is estimated that more than one million people in the United States are HIV positive, and approximately 56,300 new infections occur every year. In 2013, preliminary reporting data indicates North Dakota had 58 newly reported cases, more than any other reporting year. Blacks are disproportionately affected by HIV both nationally and here in North Dakota. Nationally, one-fourth of people estimated to be HIV positive are believed to be unaware of their infections. As a result, they do not receive medical care that could help them live longer, fuller lives. Without knowing it, they also may be transmitting HIV to others. That is why it is important for people to learn their HIV status by getting tested.

Behaviors that put people at risk include:

- Unprotected sex.
- Needle sharing for drug use.
- Unsafe tattooing and body piercing practices.

HIV testing is available at test sites throughout the state, and results are available in 20 minutes. The test sites are staffed by trained personnel who offer free and confidential HIV testing, counseling and referrals to those at risk.

For information about HIV testing and other HIV/AIDS services, call the North Dakota Department of Health HIV/AIDS Program hotline at 1.800.70.NDHIV or visit the program's website at www.ndhealth.gov/hiv. There is also a website where you can identify your risk factors through an anonymous survey at <http://www.ndhealth.gov/knowyourrisk>.

– 30 –

Please note: To access archived news releases and other information, visit the North Dakota Department of Health Press Room at www.nddohpressroom.gov. Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ndhealth or twitter at twitter.com/nddoh.

600 E. Boulevard Ave. Dept. 301, Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0200
Phone: 701.328.2372 Fax: 701.328.4727 E-mail: health@nd.gov

Visit the health department home page at www.ndhealth.gov.